



President's Message

Happy New Year Everyone, and I hope you all had a great Xmas and New years Eve and are looking forward to the year ahead.

Wine classes are to held on the 17th & 24th of February to get the year going so if anybody knows someone who might be interested let them know and get them to call me on 0488331001.

The winemakers lunches have been given seasons with dates to be announced later in the year. This years wine of country theme is Spanish and again will be held at the October meeting.

Our Bulk grapes are on order with this years varieties being Shiraz, CabSav, Sangiovese, Petit Syrah and Lagrein amongst others.

I'm looking forward to the year of 2024 and seeing you all soon

Cheers for now

January 2024

www.fawg.org.au

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Coming Up

Saturday 6th January 10 am- 5.30pm
De Bortoli wine tasting and tour with transport from Melbourne \$180
<https://en.perto.com/au/dixons-creek-248611/de-bortoli-estate-yarra-valley-779889/luxury-wine-tour-cheese-wine-at-de-bortoli-estate-8142003/>

Wednesday 10th January 6:30pm/7:30pm
Hickingbotham winery visit for January FAWG meeting \$35/free
Contact Vince Conserva to book dinner @ 6:30pm
vincent.conserva@gmail.com

Friday 26th January noon
Winemaker's lunch at David Hart's place.
Contact Dave Chambers bring a plate
daveskiss@gmail.com

Friday 26th January 8.30am-6.50pm
Winelander slow rail journey sampling the wines of the west \$120-250
<https://www.slowrailjourneys.com.au/post/26-january-the-winelander-single-day-slow-rail-journey-sampling-the-best-wine-of-the-west>

Friday 9th February 6.30pm
Three Riesling's Masterclass via Zoom from Best's Winery- includes 3 bottles shipped to you to taste during the class \$215
<https://www.bestswines.com/product/three-rieslings-zoom-masterclass>

CORDON CORNER

By Mike Payne

The tasks that lay ahead for January in the vineyard may vary largely depending on the varieties you are growing, their current growth stage, site location and climate. The main thing is to stick to the basics by ensuring fungicides are applied at the required growth stages e.g. pre-bunch closure, veraison and that an open vine canopy is maintained.

Some sites may have already gone reached bunch closure but those that are approaching, it is important to make sure the berries are covered with



fungicide before closure to protect them from botrytis and bunch rots

which may appear later in the season. Once the bunches close-up tightly it is very difficult for spray to penetrate, so timing is critical. Vine canopy management is ongoing with shoot thinning, leaf removal and hedging possibly required depending on vine vigour and if bird nets are planned to be used. Historically, vines on the lower flats of the peninsula start veraison at the end of January and a little later in the hills and cooler areas. Either way a selective tank mix fungicide is usually applied just prior to netting.



SENTIA WINE TESTING



The guild has a Sentia wine analyser available to members to have wine samples analysed for FreeSO₂ and Malic Acid.

The tests can be carried out prior to guild meetings, starting at 7pm. If you wish to have your wine analysed, please ensure you arrive early and advise Kevin Murphy that you require your wine analysed.

Samples should be kept away from air (ie in a sealed bottle, or sample vial with minimum air space). Only a very small sample is required for the tests.

Costs are: Members - Free SO₂ \$6.00 and Malic Acid \$15.00 Non-members - \$10 and \$20
FAWG Calendar

FAWG Calendar

Meeting Date	Club night Activity	Competition	Tasting Talk	Industry/Event	Committee Date
December 3rd 2023	No Tuesday meeting End of year			Sunday 3 rd Xmas party at Balnarring Hall	Tues 19 th Dec Zoom
January 10 th 2024 ***** Wednesday *****	Lagrein and other Tasting @Hickinbotham 194 Nepean Hwy Dromana		Dinner for \$35 at 6:30pm or just tasting and meeting @ 7:30pm for free Contact Vince to book dinner.		none
February 13 th 2024	Tips and tricks for making better wine	Sparkling wine mini comp		Wine Classes 17 th and 24 th February Carrum Downs	Tues 6 th Zoom 7pm
March 12 th 2024			TBA	Autumn Winemakers lunch	Tues 5 th Zoom 7pm
April 9 th 2024		Sheila Lee Liqueur & Fortified mini comp			Wed 3 rd Zoom 7pm
May 14 th 2024	Find out how good is your palate			wine tour with Eltham	Tues 7 th zoom 7pm
June 11 th 2024		Gordon Evans white wine mini comp		Winters winemakers Lunch	Tues 4 th Zoom 7pm
July 9 th 2024	AGM meeting Homemade night				Tues 2 nd zoom 7pm
August 13 th 2024	Cellar dwellers Unusual, Old and mulled wines			2024 Guild Show at Balnarring hall 30 th Judging day Sat 31 st public day	Tues 6 th Zoom 7pm
Sept 10 th				Spring Winemakers Lunch	Tues 3 rd Zoom 7pm
Oct 8 th	Spanish Night Food & Wine				Tues 1 st Zoom 7pm

<https://wineanorak.com/2023/11/20/new-research-suggests-that-it-might-be-quercetin-not-sulfites-or-biogenic-amines-that-are-responsible-for-the-headaches-some-people-experience-after-drinking-red-wine/> **New**

research suggests that it might be quercetin, not sulfites or biogenic amines, that are responsible for the headaches some people experience after drinking red wine

November 20, 2023 [jamiegoode](#) 7008 Views

Some people suffer from headaches after drinking even a small amount of red wine. Usually for these people, the response is unique to red wine, and isn't caused by other drinks. No one yet knows exactly what causes this.

But in a study published today in [Scientific Reports](#) by a group at the University of California, Davis, there's evidence that the culprit might be quercetin, a flavanol found naturally in red wines. This may be interfering with the proper metabolism of alcohol, leading to symptoms including headache. [Interestingly, [this research was Crowdfunded](#).]



Quercetin is found in a range of fruits and vegetables, including grapes, and acts as an antioxidant, so it can be beneficial. It's only in the presence of alcohol that it can be problematic.

'When it gets in your bloodstream, your body converts it to a different form called quercetin glucuronide,' says Andrew Waterhouse, one of the authors of this study. 'In that form, it blocks the metabolism of alcohol.'

Alcohol is broken down to acetaldehyde, which is toxic and inflammatory. It's then further broken down by acetaldehyde dehydrogenase, which is the enzyme that quercetin glucuronide can inhibit. The continued presence of acetaldehyde in the bloodstream can cause flushing reactions, headaches and nausea. A proportion of east Asian people (around 40%) [have a version of this enzyme that doesn't work well](#), and this allows acetaldehyde to build up in their system.

'Quercetin is produced by the grapes in response to sunlight,' says Waterhouse. 'If you grow grapes with the clusters exposed, such as they do in the Napa Valley for their cabernets, you get much higher levels of quercetin. In some cases, it can be four to five times higher.' Levels of quercetin can also differ depending on winemaking techniques.

I asked Waterhouse: [people have blamed sulfites, and then biogenic amines for adverse reactions to wine](#) – could it be that quercetin is to blame and that we shouldn't be too worried about these two?

'Mark Daeschel at Oregon State told me that the levels of biogenic amines are just too low,' he responded. 'As for sulfites, they may be indirectly related, but that is yet another research project. But sulfites themselves are not a culprit, or consumers of colorful dried fruit would be reporting headaches.'

So if quercetin is a problem, do you think people affected should avoid all red wines? Or is there a way to find safer ones? 'I am hopeful that in the future there will be a way to alert consumers to high levels. But the first step is to check our hypothesis with a human study.' This is planned, and it will be interesting to see the results.

Funnies



Xmas Wrap up



Wine Making Classes February

This course introduces the principles of wine making, but more importantly, introduces you to the expertise and experience of over 100 guild members who will be more than happy to assist, or mentor, you through your winemaking journey. Where feasible, you will be assigned a guild 'buddy' who lives close to you, so that you can call for advice, or assistance, when winemaking.

- The course is provided on a not-for-profit basis and includes a basic winemaking kit.
- The kit includes a winemaking book, equipment and ingredients for your first batch of fruit wine.
- Experienced guild members will be available to answer any questions you may have and they will provide wine for tasting and evaluation.
- **An initial free membership of the guild, up to the AGM in July, is also included in the cost of the course, so that you can talk to our members and get a feel for what the guild offers.**

Wine class payment deadline end of January
Payment into the guild acc 633-000
143837391 ref box surname
Contact email or phone Glen on 0488331001
Cost \$165 everything provided
Time 9am-1pm approx
Bring pen and paper for taking notes
Kevins address: factory 2/3 lathams rd Carrum
Downs



My Vintage Year

By: Dave Chambers

Today it is Steve Ney. I have known Steve for a couple of years now. Having first met him at a Eltham Wine Show about three or four years ago. Typical of Steve he is always there helping wherever possible on both the set-up judging day or the open day for wine tasting. You are gold Steve, people like you, that just put in.



We would benefit more if Steve lived in Melbourne but alas, he lives in NSW. Fortunately for him he has more superior skills at wine making than he does for selecting places to live. I'm joking of course he lives in Mt Keira Road, Wollongong which sounds as though it has a fabulous view and is quite near a park. I am after this Interview thinking there are a whole lot more questions I have of Steve about his Japanese experiences. No secret I am passionate about the Japanese and their wonderful country. Steve is considering joining the FAWG. I hope he does, if for no other reason than all wine guilds should be supported. It is almost a men's shed for wine connoisseurs, both men and women alike. And another hobby horse of mine is trying to get a beneficial deal for all members to belong to both guilds. And you may be reading this in the EWDG Newsletter. We are going to have more collaboration with both guilds in 2024, I hope.

I find myself agreeing almost always with the desert island choices of all interviewees. What would you take to [Loloata Private Island Resort, Papua New Guinea](#).

Dave: Why wine and not beer.

Steve: As a young man ½ glass of beer left me feeling sick, so spirits became my drink of choice. In my early twenties I started drinking wine & have enjoyed doing so ever since. I started my wine making journey 8 years ago, during my second vintage, after a long day of making & tasting wine I couldn't face more wine that night & I drank my first beer in 45 years. I now enjoy trying different craft beers with all their nuances, beer brewing is on the distant horizon. My family now enjoy reminding me that making wine drove me to beer.

Dave: What wine region or village anywhere in the world is your fantasy wine tasting destination.

Steve: I've always enjoyed travelling, I will go anywhere if the opportunity arises, when I travel, I make a point of tasting & drinking the local wines. My fantasy is to visit every wine making region in Australia.

Dave: What is your first experience that you remember that led to an interest in wine.

Steve: I remember as a child that Australians drank beer, foreigners drank wine, a dreadful stereotype from the 60's.

Expovin 1979 - an opportunity to consume lots of alcohol at low cost, which ultimately started a journey of discovery in the world of wine.

Dave: What is an interesting unknown fact about you that members of Frankston or Eltham Guild may or may not find interesting.

Steve: Because of family & friends my wines are well travelled.

My wines have been consumed in Queensland, Victoria, New Zealand, Crete & Japan.
All with positive Feedback

Dave: What wine do you prefer to make Red or White and what variety.

Steve: I prefer to do something different whenever possible, predominantly I make red for two reasons.

Red grapes are more abundant & white wine is my nemesis, I've more failures than successes. I prefer to make anything that I haven't made previously, I will attempt anything subject to availability. I have a growing interest in country wines & mead.

Angela Harridge has a Vice Presidents Question for you:

Question: You've been making Umeshu for the last few years. It's not your everyday liqueur. Can you share with us what got you interested in it, what it is and how it is made?

Steve: For many years we had Japanese students stay with us on exchange programs. We remain in contact with some of them, my wife has always loved Japan & has visited more times than I want to count. My brother-in-law has lived in Japan for 8 years.

My wife is a big fan of Umeshu, when anybody returns from Japan we always receive Umeshu & whiskey. When we go to Japan my wine & now my Umeshu also travels.

Umeshu is a Japanese plum liqueur. There are many variations to Umeshu which I find fascinating, every time I search for information, I learn something different. The finished liqueur has an abv ranging from 12% to 30%.

It is relatively simple to make. You steep sour plums & sugar in white spirit.

Time is the key ingredient the minimum steeping time is 1 year ideally it should steep for 3 years.

My batches are currently 2 years old & are already being enjoyed here & Japan.

Ume plums are used in Japan to make Umeshu & Umeboshi, a pickled plum, which is an acquired taste.

I've not been able to source Ume plums in Australia so I currently substitute a middle eastern variety called janerik



Dave: Does technical astuteness give you an edge in your wine making skills. Wine making is skill that unfolds with experience. Are you finding this to be true for you in your wine making.

Steve: I believe that technical astuteness does give you an edge, it allows you to have an understanding of the "why" of your experience giving greater depth to your understanding of your developing skill set.

Dave: Are you into the intellectual part of the discussion about wine. Wine can be so many things to so many people. But what does it bring to you.

Steve: I love every part of the discussion about wine, my sensory skills are at best, underdeveloped, I enjoy listening to a skilled person dissect a wine & then following, trying to pick the identified components. At the other end of the spectrum I've been with friends who find the wine world intimidating & I suggest, take a deep sniff, the first part of the taste sensation, take a sip & move it round your mouth & swallow. Did you like it? Yes – it's a great wine. No – try something different.

Dave: Are you a pedantic fussy wine maker or do you prefer to feel your way along steady as she goes. It will work out in the end.

Steve: As a young man who believed he could do everything better than everybody else, I was grounded by an old craftsman, his words were: *It amazes me that an amateur without training &*

the correct tools believes he will do a better job than a trained person with all of the correct tools"
The comment has stayed with me & I approach everything with this in mind. For wine making I gleaned as much information as I could from all sources, as I started the process I accumulated the best tools that I could afford.

I tend to be pedantic, at least with the fundamentals so that I have a baseline to work from if I choose to allow the wine to follow it's own path.

Dave: What are you excited about for the future of home wine making. Where do you see it unfolding over the next ten years.

Steve: Home wine making should be about pushing the boundaries. I love that country wines are only limited by a person's imagination.

Dave: What inspires you to make better wine. Is it the Gold medals or the knowledge that you are ever improving on your skill.

Steve: I make wine for myself & friends.

The first year I made wine some close friends visited & I offered a tasting of my first wine, with apprehension they accepted, with even greater trepidation they took a sip. Instant relief & *"hey this isn't bad; we expected the worst."*

The greatest accolade I have had.

From that day I was inspired to do better.

Who am I kidding, who doesn't love a gold medal.

Dave: Who or what has been your biggest influence in wine making and how long have you been a Wine Maker.

Steve: My daughter was studying wine science, apparently, I drove her crazy with questions about the process of making wine. October 2014, she drew a line in the sand, *"no more questions unless you actually do something"*. We purchased apples & made apple cider, a simple way to learn the process. Plans were put in place to make wine as my daughter was not going away to do a vintage & would be around to help. Early March I purchased my grapes, while we were processing them my daughter receives a phone call, we had somebody dropout please come & help, sorry dad I'm off to Rutherglen tomorrow you'll be OK.

She was right, eventually I was OK & the fun hasn't stopped.

Dave: Can you describe where you make your wine. Is it in your kitchen or do you have a dedicated area for wine making.

Steve: My winery is often described as compact. Part of a single garage. Everything is on wheels, press, tubs, tanks, kegs & barrels, so the layout can be adjusted to suit the current job. The space is challenging given that my two largest years I processed 1,900kg in 2019 & 1,500kg in 2020

Dave: What have been the positive surprises of your membership of the wine guild.

Steve: The warmth & friendship extended by everyone I encounter.

The generosity of members who will spend time & offer advice & assistance.

Dave: What were you drinking in your twenties.

Steve: Sweet & fruity German wine, whiskey & bourbon.
The wine slowly improved in quality.



Dave: If you could tell the young Steve about life, what advice would you give.

Steve: Don't procrastinate, do it now & enjoy every moment.

Dave: Enlighten us with a couple of your favourite wine tweaks.

Steve: I was fortunate enough to learn early that a small addition of a different wine could fill an obvious gap in a wine taking it to a whole other level.

Dave: I have heard in my short time with the guild some complete disasters while making wine. What is your biggest disaster you can share with us.

Steve: First vintage doing manual calculations for my first PMS addition, mixing up the decimal points adding 100 times the dose. I'll leave the result to your imagination.

Dave: I have asked this question of everyone. So far, a hundred percent have said making wine was never a financial consideration. What was the motivation and still is for you after so many years.

Steve: Tricky question.

I started making wine because I was & still are fascinated by the process. I was also considering things that I might do in retirement & this hobby creates stuff that people actually want.

Financial consideration was not a driver but I struck a deal with my wife if I could make good wine I would cancel all of my wine subscriptions (there were way too many) to fund my equipment purchases – win/win

And Finally

Dave: You are going to a desert island to spend some chill time. You are taking with you one piece of music, one bottle of wine, a book and food. To be clear, that is a choice of one bottle of wine, one meal and so on. What will be placed in your suitcase and declared at the customs terminal on your way to Loloata Private Island Resort, Papua New Guinea.

Steve: Dark Side Of The Moon – Pink Floyd

Wynns John Riddoch Cabernet Sauvignon

Rib eye steak cooked over charcoal with salad.

Master & Commander – Patrick O'Brian



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